REMARKS

Claims 1-7 are now pending in the application. Minor amendments have been made to the claims to simply overcome the rejections of the claims under 35 U.S.C. § 112. The Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider and withdraw the rejection(s) in view of the amendments and remarks contained herein.

REJECTION UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 1 and 3-5 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Massa (U.S. Pat. No. 4,128,370). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

In particular, the '370 patent teaches of the lower base portion of the mold 8 being supported on an intermediate plate member 9, which is, in turn, flexibly supported from the rigid base member 4 by the helical springs 10... (Column 3, lines 15-18). This may be adequate for the manufacture of electroacoustic transducers as taught by Massa, but for the manufacturing of brake lining material a much more unified mold assembly is required. Specifically, Applicants invention teaches of the platform 32 being directly secured to the support structure 30, without the springs 34 displaced there between. This provides for a more stable mold base, by preventing unsymmetrical compression from the press from a floating intermediate plate as taught by Massa.

Furthermore, The '370 patent teaches of secondary compressed springs 15, which maintain the platform member 14 in the uppermost position, (column 4, Lines 31-34) wherein Applicants invention has a fixed equivalent platform member, as mentioned above. Applicant has amended the claims to more particularly point out the subject matter which Applicant claims as his invention, and therefore respectfully requests the examiners withdrawal of this rejection.

Claims 1 and 3-5 further stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Sothje (U.S. Pat. No. 4,157,887). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Sothje teaches of a compound mold which utilizes plural spring forces from springs 38 and 56, which add to the complexity in design and manufacturing costs. Furthermore, Neither spring components are attached to the base or bottom support structure as contemplated and taught by Applicants invention, which provide for even compression of the mold frame, as well as release of the finished molded product without the implementation of an ejector type mechanism as taught by the '887 patent (column 5, lines 41-43).

Claims 1-6 also stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Mess (U.S. Pat. No. 6,007,317). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Mess teaches of spring elements 72 located between the floating upper plate 62 and the upper mold chase 66. Applicants invention does away with the need for a floating upper plate 62 by having springs mounted on the bottom support structure 30, directly biasing against the mold frame 24. This reduction in components correlates to a reduction in manufacturing costs as well as providing a more direct compression force on the platform 32.

CONCLUSION

It is believed that all of the stated grounds of rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. Applicant therefore respectfully requests that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw all presently outstanding rejections. It is believed that a full and complete response has been made to the outstanding Office Action, and as such, the present application is in condition for allowance. Thus, prompt and favorable consideration of this amendment is respectfully requested. If the Examiner believes that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at (248) 641-1600.

Respectfully submitted,

Dated: 1-31-2005

By: J. Blair Miller
J. Blair Miller
Reg. No. 53,862

HARNESS, DICKEY & PIERCE, P.L.C.
P.O. Box 828
Bloomfield Hills, Michigan 48303
(248) 641-1600